

## **PIRC 1999 Discretionary Grant Competition Qs and As**

### **Who is eligible to apply for PIRC funds?**

Private non-profit organizations and non-profit organizations in consortium with local education agencies in the following States may apply:

California	New Hampshire
Colorado	New Jersey
Florida	New York
Georgia	North Carolina
Hawaii	Ohio
Iowa	Oklahoma
Kentucky	Pennsylvania
Maine	South Dakota
Maryland	Tennessee
Massachusetts	Texas
Michigan	Vermont
Minnesota	Washington
Missouri	Wisconsin
Nevada	District of Columbia

The following nonprofit organizations are **NOT** eligible to apply:

- A local education agency by itself
- Institutions of higher education
- State education agencies
- Government entities
- Hospitals
- Schools

### **What's the timeline for the PIRC discretionary grant competition?**

March 31, 1999:	Application Notice published
April 30, 1999:	Closing date
May 23, 1999:	Panel review
Mid-July, 1999:	Award grants

### **What is the purpose of the Goals 2000 Parent Information and Resource Centers?**

The primary purpose of the parent centers is to: increase parent's knowledge of and confidence in child-rearing activities; to strengthen partnerships between parents and professionals in meeting the educational needs of children aged birth to five and the working relationship between home and school; and to enhance the developmental progress of children assisted under the program.

Applicants should use research-based practices and technological advances to provide a mix of direct training services and statewide information and support services to address the needs of the targeted populations. Entities with established statewide organizational structures and proven effectiveness may be more likely to successfully address these needs.

### **Who should the parent center serve?**

While parent center services should be accessible for any parent, grantees must use at least half of their funding to service areas with high concentrations of low-income families in order to serve parents who are educationally or economically disadvantaged, minority and/or Limited-English proficient. However, parents are not the only direct audience for parent center services. Funds can be used to provide services and training to educators and professionals to build their capacity to work in partnership with parents to help children succeed in school.

### **What activities should an applicant be prepared to provide if they are considering applying for a grant?**

Services should be designed to increase partnerships between parents and schools; increase parents' awareness of education issues; increase the number of children and parents in the state who participate in Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY); and partner or network with other national, State, and local organizations, agencies, and parent centers (e.g. State education agencies, local education agencies, parent/teacher organizations and centers under section 613 (e) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

### **What should an applicant keep in mind when designing an application?**

Applicants should develop strategies that: create a statewide system or network of information and services; help parents, organizations that serve parents and families, and schools to work together to support student learning; use technology to provide services and broaden a center's outreach; and provide or expand PAT or HIPPY services.

### **How should applicants incorporate the performance measures, that are provided in the application notice, into the application?**

Applicants may use all or parts of the examples provided in the sample performance plan along with additional objectives that relate to the specific activities identified in the application. All applicants are expected to provide a performance plan. The information need not be presented in the same fashion as provided in the application notice, but all applications must include a process to measure progress towards attaining outcomes described in the application.

### **Can an applicant serve only parents of preschool youngsters?**

No. While all centers must provide PAT and/or HIPPY programs for parents of preschool children, the parent centers are to provide training, information and support to parents of children who are in elementary and secondary schools, as well as, parents of children birth through five. Applicants should also note that Section 1118(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, requires schools and districts receiving Title I funds to assist parents and parent organizations by informing them of the existence and purpose of the Parent Information and Resource Center in their State, providing them with a description of the services and programs provided by the center, advising parents on how to use the center, and helping them contact the center. Consequently, applicants should be prepared to address the demand for their services created by this requirement. However, there is no set percentage of services that must be allocated for anyone group.

### **What if my state already has PAT and HIPPY programs?**

Applicants still must use some portions of this funding to establish, expand or operate one or both of these programs. However, grantees have the flexibility of building on existing services. For example, funds can be used to expand existing PAT or HIPPY programs within a state or a community in order to expand services to reach more low-income families.

### **What geographic area is an applicant expected to serve?**

Since there will be only one parent center in each state, it is important for applicants to consider strategies that provide service beyond their local community and provides statewide visibility. Organizations seeking funding must have the capacity to deliver services of sufficient size, scope, and quality to reach substantial numbers of children and families throughout the State, in both urban and rural areas, with a particular focus on parents who are educationally and economically disadvantaged, minority, and limited-English proficient. In providing these services, the organizations must network with clearinghouses, parent centers served under the Individuals with Disabilities Act, parent groups, other organizations and agencies, and elementary and secondary school, especially Title I schools.

### **Can grant funds be used to purchase or lease computers and/or other types of equipment?**

Yes. Funds may be used for computers or other equipment as long as the equipment is necessary to provide the services authorized in the grant and costs are reasonable. For example, many of the current parent centers use funds to host web sites, provide electronic information and referral services, and electronically link to the Department's web site and the web sites of other organizations that provide family involvement in education to research and access information that could be shared with parents.

### **Can funds be used to support sub-grants to other organizations and/or agencies?**

Grant recipients under this program are not allowed to sub-grant funds to other organizations and/or agencies. However, applicants may propose contracts where a specific scope of work is defined and a contract will be awarded to an agency or organization that is capable of fulfilling the work requirements.

### **How can one center meet all of these expectations within the funding limitations?**

The Goals 2000 Parental Information and Resource Centers concept can be difficult to implement, but it can be done. Programs are expected to network with other organizations within their state that work with parents and families to support children's successes in school. Many of the currently funded centers build on other existing resources and networks in their state to help them meet all of their program requirements. For example, some of the current grantees work closely with Even Start, Head Start, State Departments of Education, PTAs, and community groups to provide services.

### **How will applications be reviewed and selected for funding?**

Applications will be reviewed by a three person panel of non-federal professionals. Each application will be scored according to the selection criteria described in the application notice. The three scores will then be averaged. The highest scoring application in each State will be selected for funding. No form of preference will be given to any applicant for the receipt of a grant award.

### **Are there resources that may be helpful in preparing an application for this program?**

Yes, many research-based documents have been published by the Department and are available on the web page at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/pfie.html>. Following is a partial list of those that may be helpful:

A compact for Learning: An Action handbook for Family School-Community Partnerships  
(December 1997)

The Corporate Imperative: Results and Benefits of Business Involvement in Education  
(September 1998)

Employees, Families and Education

Family Involvement In Children's Education: Successful Local Approaches (October 1997)

Family Involvement In Education: A National Portrait

Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools (October 1997)

Get Involved! How Parents and Families Can Help their Children Do Better in School

Getting Ready for college Early (August 1997)

Information for Families and Community Members

New Skills for New Schools (1997)

Preparing Your Child for College (1996-69)

Parent Involvement in Children's Education: Efforts by public Elementary Schools (January 1998)

Reaching All Families and Creating Family Friendly Schools